United Nations A/64/PV.1

General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

1st plenary meeting
Tuesday, 15 September 2009, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the session by the President of the General Assembly

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I declare open the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 62 of the rules of procedure, I invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silent prayer or meditation.

Statement by the President

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to begin by expressing my gratitude and appreciation for having been elected President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. My election is a great honour for my country and its leadership. It confers on me the considerable responsibility of doing everything I can to promote the interests, peace, prosperity and well-being of the international community.

I should also like to thank Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, and to express my utmost consideration, appreciation, gratitude and respect for his excellent stewardship of that session. He fulfilled that vital role with courage and wisdom.

I have met with members of regional groups and bilateral meetings. The trust and support they have expressed in me have given me confidence in myself and in the future of the United Nations, which is our only hope for security, peace, well-being and prosperity. The United Nations and, in particular, the General Assembly are the way to a better future. People of all colours, religions and origins must cooperate and engage in dialogue through our Organization.

The world has become much smaller as a result of tremendous progress in information and communications technology. We all feel now that whatever affects some of us also affects the others, and that dialogue is the only solution. Despite that realization and that hope, we should not make light of the problems that confront us.

I think everyone understands that the United Nations is in need of reform and democratization. The General Assembly, which represents the entire world, has been hampered by the obstacles in its path. It has been unable to ensure respect for or enforce its resolutions. The United Nations must be reformed and regain international legitimacy, ensuring that its voice is heard and respected and that its resolutions are implemented.

The reform of the Security Council, the expansion of its membership and the achievement of

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

09-51414 (E)

Please recycle

equitable geographic representation are also of the utmost importance. Most of the world's inhabitants do not enjoy democratic representation. Africa, for example, is comprised of 53 States, none of which is a permanent member of the Security Council, yet they have the same characteristics as those permanent members. The same is true of Latin America and of the smaller countries represented by the Forum of Small States, which account for over half of the world's inhabitants. It is vital to reform the Security Council and to reinvigorate the General Assembly so that they can comprehensively fulfil their roles.

Dialogue and mutual understanding are the way to resolve our problems. Embargos and blockades are fruitless; they exacerbate antagonism and rebellion, while undermining respect for the will of the international community. Their only effect is on the population. Whatever their causes, wars are a humanitarian tragedy that cannot be justified. We must put an end to wars and to their causes and consequences.

Notwithstanding the work that has been done with a view to reducing the gap between rich and poor, that gap has grown steadily wider. The poor are becoming poorer and the rich are becoming richer, most often at the expense of the poor and by exploiting the resources with which they are endowed. In an unequal and disharmonious world, we cannot hope for peace and security to prevail.

We have all condemned terrorism, which causes instability and endangers the international community. Yet despite our joint efforts and resolutions, terrorism continues to grow and spread. We must address its roots and take a close and serious look at its causes and contributing factors. This is equally true of terrorism carried out by individuals, groups and States; State terrorism is the harshest form of terrorism.

The situation in the Middle East, which has remained unresolved for over 60 years, is another threat to the international community. Despite the resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council, peace remains a distant prospect. Through the General Assembly, the United Nations must assume a serious new role. The numerous resolutions of the United Nations must be respected and implemented.

The Palestinian people's aspirations to independence and its right to return to its land in accordance with United Nations resolutions are two fundamental conditions for the swift realization of peace and security in that sensitive part of the world. There must be an end to settlement activities, which have been condemned by the entire international community. The removal of illegal and illegitimate settlements would help to achieve security and a just peace in accordance with the resolutions with which we must comply.

Most of the world's peoples live below the poverty line. Millions continue to die of hunger, malnutrition and disease. Such tragedies are a cause of concern to all of us. War and tension remain widespread. We cannot build or achieve progress in a world where instability and insecurity prevail. Development and security are interdependent. We are faced with many momentous issues whose resolution requires dialogue, cooperation and community spirit.

The theme of the sixty-fourth session encompasses joint responsibility for development, the realization of peace and security, and dialogue among civilizations, all of which are pressing issues.

The special Summit on Climate Change convened by the Secretary-General will take place over the next few days. This could be an opportunity for us to bring recommendations to the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, which will focus on the danger of climate change. This topic, which is the subject of international consensus, affects the future of us all. We must work together not only to attenuate the danger but to end it and protect this planet, which is our common home.

Our development goals for the third millennium, for which we determined the year 2015 as the deadline, may not be easy to achieve. The General Assembly will address that issue at its sixty-fourth session with a high-level meeting in preparation for the year 2010. I look forward to our joint consultations within the framework of resolution 63/302. In this connection, the resolutions on joint action for development in Africa coincide with the announcement we made at the General Assembly.

The crisis of the global economy, which has affected us all, rich and poor alike, is another cause of concern to the international community. In view of the danger posed by the crisis, the relevant resolution of the General Assembly (resolution 63/303) established a working group to follow up on the topic and promote any recommendations that could be undertaken jointly to remedy the situation. I call on all

States to consider the issue and take part in the search for solutions.

The goal of disarmament and non-proliferation is shared by all mankind, particularly with respect to weapons of mass destruction, which currently pose a great threat. We must shoulder our responsibilities and work not only towards non-proliferation and the elimination of nuclear weapons, but also towards the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction.

I assure all members that I shall do my utmost to ensure that the General Assembly gives sustained, serious and responsible consideration to, reaches consensus on, and resolves the issues that are brought before it.

I should like to commend Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the support that he has extended to me. We will be working very closely together with a view to achieving our goals of development, stability and security. I shall also make every effort to ensure full cooperation and coordination with the Security Council in various fields; our common interests demand such coordination and consultation. I assure the General Assembly that my door will be open to everyone.

In conclusion, I pray that we may achieve our aims and aspirations to well-being, progress, security and stability.

Item 132 of the provisional agenda

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/64/345)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Next, I would like, in keeping with established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/64/345. It contains a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly, in which he informs the Assembly that six Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I would like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I therefore take it that the General Assembly takes note of the information contained in document A/64/345?

It was so decided.

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Credentials of representatives to the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly

(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Rule 28 of the rules of procedure provides that the General Assembly, at the beginning of each session, shall appoint, on the proposal of the President, a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members.

Accordingly, it is proposed that for the sixty-fourth session the Credentials Committee should consist of the following Member States: Brazil, China, Jamaica, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Zambia.

May I take it that the States I have mentioned are hereby appointed members of the Credentials Committee?

It was so decided.

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/64/348)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Members are aware that, pursuant to section 1, paragraph 7, of resolution 40/243, no subsidiary organ of the General Assembly should be permitted to meet at United Nations Headquarters during the main part of a regular session of the Assembly, unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly.

On the strict understanding that meetings would have to be accommodated within available facilities and services, authorization is thus sought for the

following subsidiary organs: the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, the Disarmament Commission, the Executive Board of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Dispute Tribunal, and the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to authorize those subsidiary organs of the Assembly to meet during the main part of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.